



Massachusetts
Department
of
ENVIRONMENTAL
PROTECTION

fact sheet

Carpooling

Americans love to drive. There are more cars, minivans and SUVs being driven more miles on our roads than ever before. That adds up to traffic and air pollution.

Passenger vehicles are a major source of hydrocarbons, nitrogen oxides and carbon monoxide, and traffic on the road accounts for about 40 percent of the pollution that contributes to ground-level ozone – the main ingredient in smog.

You can help improve air quality and reduce traffic congestion by carpooling – sharing your ride to and from work with one or more other people at least a couple of times a week, if not every day – or vanpooling if more people than can comfortably fit in a car want to commute together.

How do I start carpooling?

Probably the easiest way is to mention it to co-workers, friends or neighbors who have similar commutes and work hours. Chances are that one or more will be interested.

You may also want to contact the human resources department where you work. Depending on its size, your employer may be required by the Massachusetts Rideshare Regulation (310 CMR 7.16) to develop plans and set goals for reducing employee drive-alone commute trips. Companies and educational institutions subject to the regulation are required to offer carpool matching programs and other ridesharing incentives.

Why is carpooling better than driving alone?

First of all, it saves you money. Commuting is expensive when you drive alone. Gas, tolls and parking can add up to thousands of dollars every year. By carpooling with just one other person, you can cut those costs in half. Add another person or two and your costs will be even lower – a small fraction of what they would have been had you continued driving alone.

In addition to being a lot more economical than driving alone, carpooling can help you:

- Spend less time in traffic. Carpool vehicles get to destinations faster because they can travel in high occupancy vehicle (HOV) lanes on major highways.
- Relax more. Carpool members generally rotate driving duties. When you're a passenger, you can sit back and read, sip a cup of coffee, or even take a nap.
- Balance work and family commitments. Develop a flexible commuting schedule with your fellow carpool members.

For more information

MassRIDES, a service of the Massachusetts Department of Transportation, is a great source of carpool, vanpool and ride matching assistance. Visit www.commute.com or call 1-888-4COMMUTE (1-888-426-6688) to learn more about your commuting options.

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